

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-18 are pending. Claims 1-7 are amended, and claims 16-18 are added. Claims 1, 7, and 16 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-4 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Unemoto (U.S. 6,178,106) in view of Shinochi (U.S. 5,285,011) and Okada (U.S. 5,967,819); and claims 1-3 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kourimsky (U.S. 4,135,226). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amendments to Independent Claim 1

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the present application, independent claim 1 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a component parts box for a vehicle including

a substrate having at least a first row, a second row, and a third row, each of the rows having lengths extending laterally across the vehicle, the second row being arranged in a stepped down manner from the first row, and the third row being arranged in a stepped down manner from the second row;

a plurality of component parts being arranged in a line on each of the stepped rows of the substrate wherein connecting terminals of the component parts face the associated row; and

a mounting plate disposed adjacent to each end the first row of the substrate for mounting the component parts box onto the vehicle in the inclined position.

Support for a mounting plate disposed adjacent to each end of the first row (uppermost row) of the substrate for mounting the component parts box onto the vehicle in the inclined position is clearly illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 4.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including DE 44 39 426, Hayashi, and Hayakawa et al.

After a careful review of the references cited by the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the documents fails to teach or suggest a mounting plate disposed adjacent to each end the first row of the substrate for mounting the component parts box onto the vehicle in an inclined position.

Thus, at least for the reasons explained above, the Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including, DE 44 39 426, Hayashi, and Hayakawa et al.

Therefore, claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Amendments to Independent Claim 7

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the present application, independent claim 7 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a component parts box for a vehicle including a housing, said housing including

an upper surface and a lower surface,

an inclined connecting surface for securing a first end of said upper surface to a first end said lower surface, and

a stepped connecting wall for securing a second end of said upper surface to a second end of said lower surface, the stepped connecting wall joining the upper surface and the lower surface of the housing at angles that are substantially perpendicular.

Support for stepped connecting wall 36e for securing a second end of said upper surface 36b to a second end of said lower surface 36c, the stepped connecting wall 36e joining the upper surface 36b and the lower surface 36c of the housing at angles that are substantially perpendicular, can be seen in FIG. 3.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements set forth in independent claim 7 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including DE 44 39 426, Hayashi, and Hayakawa et al.

None of these documents teaches or suggests stepped connecting wall 36e for securing a second end of said upper surface 36b to a second end of said lower surface 36c, the stepped

connecting wall 36e joining the upper surface 36b and the lower surface 36c of the housing at angles that are substantially perpendicular, as presently claimed.

Therefore, independent claim 7 is in condition for allowance.

Added Independent Claim 16 and Dependent Claims 17 and 18

Independent claim 16 is added herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a component parts box for a vehicle including

a plurality of component parts, the component parts being arranged in a stepped manner,

wherein connecting terminals are provided on one side of each of the component parts, and

wherein conductors are connected to the terminals, the conductors being led out of terminals in substantially a straight manner and in a forwardly and downwardly slanted direction with respect to an upright direction.

Support for a plurality of component parts 36, the component parts 36 being arranged in a stepped manner, wherein connecting terminals 54 are provided on one side of each of the component parts 36, and wherein conductors 42 are connected to the terminals 42, the conductors 42 being led out of terminals 54 in substantially a straight manner and in a forwardly and downwardly slanted direction with respect to an upright direction, can be seen in FIGS, 1, 3, and 4.

Dependent claims 17 and 18 are added depending from claim 16.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of elements set forth in independent claim 16 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including DE 44 39 426, Hayashi, and Hayakawa et al.

Therefore, independent claim 16 is in condition for allowance.

All dependent claims of this application are in condition for allowance due to their dependence on allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicants respectfully petition for a two (2) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application and the required fee of \$420 is being filed concurrently herewith.

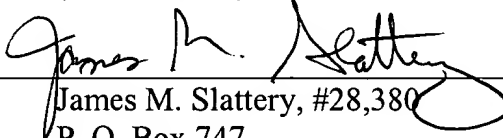
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If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Two (2) Replacement Sheets of Formal Drawing (Figures 3 and 4)